

IN THE LOOP

THE LEAP DSP QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

This is where we "LEAP" into the work of serving our districts



RIDE Rhode Island
Department
of Education

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Editors: Stacy Jones and Mike Mancieri, DSP Fellows
Produced in Canva by Dana Chambers, WestEd; Photography by Mike Mancieri

COMMISSIONER'S WELCOME

Welcome to *In the Loop*, a Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) quarterly newsletter for participants in the LEAP District Support Program (DSP). This publication will serve as both a resource and a space for telling the story of the work in which DSP districts are engaged. We welcome and are eager to work with the communities of Central Falls, East Providence, Johnston, Newport, North Providence, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick, and Woonsocket. These districts have all agreed, in partnership with RIDE, to undergo a process of deep review that is designed to help each identify priority areas and commit to addressing them by utilizing research-based practices and tools to better serve all the members of their school communities. Our inaugural issue elevates a range of voices—students, a community partner, and a RIDE employee—in addition to sharing helpful and timely resources. The DSP is a game changer—a critical effort to accelerate learning through targeted initiatives and specialized support with the goal of bolstering districts that were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. We are thrilled that this newsletter will allow our education stakeholders to be regularly updated on the progress we are making to benefit our kids. We encourage recipients to share the newsletter with teachers, staff, parents, community stakeholders and other interested parties.

This edition includes:

- Important LEAP DSP dates
- Resources to support your work
- *In the Spotlight: Newport* Improving School Climate Through Student Voice
- Survey: What do you want to see in the newsletter?

[LINK](#)

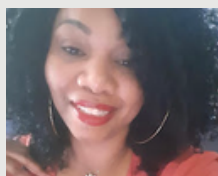




MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- LEAP Support Network Delivery Team - Session 4: "Design a Pilot Study; Identify and Prioritize Solutions Matched to Root Causes"
 - April 14, 2022, from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- As part of its strategic plan, RIDE is committed to recruiting and supporting educators of color. Learn more about the components of this initiative.

[Click here for more on the initiative](#)



In the Spotlight: Newport Improving School Climate Through Student Voice

The school year was still young in October 2021 at Thompson Middle School in Newport, RI. Yet, a group of 20 students had consistently received numerous referrals per month for fighting, or for what teachers labeled aggression or anger. The students were stuck in a destructive cycle, and the staff was at a loss for how to respond. It was this situation that produced the **Heart Club**, with the help of a trusted Newport School District community partner, [FabNewport](#).

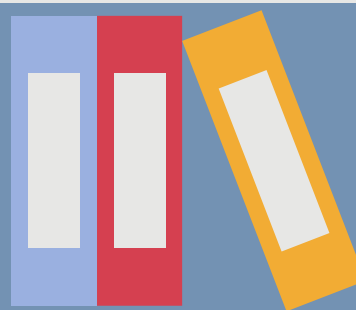
[Read More](#)

Student
Podcast:
Newport's
Black
Voice



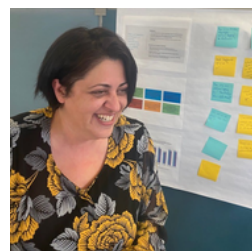
Newport's Black Voice
School Daze

[Listen Here](#)



LEAP DSP RESOURCES

- RIDE offers a series of training modules available online and in print to support districts in their school improvement efforts. Ask your DSP Support Fellow for more information.
- Coming Soon: Resource planning tools from RIDE and WestEd to support district completion of the District Support Program Supplemental Application, including stakeholder engagement and equitable and sustainable investment planning tools.



INSIDE RIDE: DSP FELLOW AZADEH NOORBALOOCHI

Azadeh "Azi" Noorbaloochi, came to RIDE in October of 2021. Azi brings over 15 years of experience to this work as both a classroom teacher and an administrative leader. Azi is married with two children (and a dog named Skittles). She loves to host friends—anyone who visits her home is an instant friend—and paints in her spare time. We stopped by Azi's office where she was working to develop the DSP AcceleGrant platform for the next phase of the DSP program. We asked her a few questions. Click below to read the interview.

[Read More](#)